

2006

## The Concord, 4 October 2006

Luther Seminary

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# CONCORD

*A Journalistic Ministry of Students at Luther Seminary*

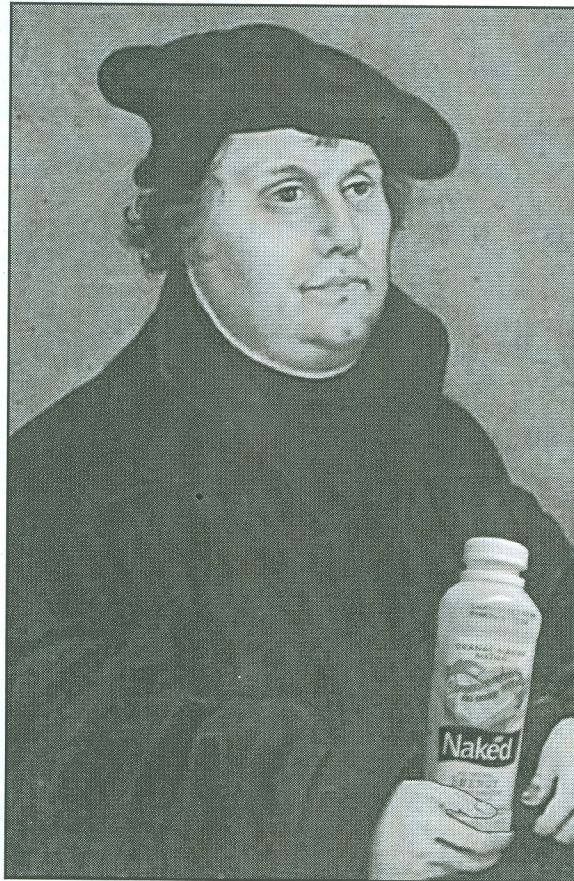
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October 4, 2006

St. Paul, Minnesota

Volume 36, Issue 1

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## Cheers to Your Health

Working out our wellness with fear and trembling

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### HIV/AIDS: The Face of a Woman

*By Margaret Obaga, Pg. 3*

### Church, Meet World

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### Risky Business: Healthy Living in the ELCA

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*Plus: A column from the new seminary pastor, a lesson in Norwegian and more*

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# Letter from the Editor

**By Natalie Gessert**

Concord managing editor

The family tree of Luther Seminary is formally traced back to 1869. It was originally called Augsburg Seminary and supported by the Norwegian-Danish Conference. Being that I am not of any sort of Scandinavian descent, I have my own genealogical vision of this place mapped out: scruffy Lutheran Vikings (like the Citibank commercials) somehow transformed into a clean congregation of blondes with lilting accents, eating more lefse than anyone should stomach. These curious people, real and imagined on my part, managed to create this place of theological education that has stood for over a century.

As I have rooted around in the historical files of the *Concord* office, I have also discovered an intriguing sort of family tree unfolding in the dusty piles. As Vikings grew to be Vikings fans, the *Concord* has grown from beautiful type-print newspaper to newsletter-style, later a journal of essay proportion with presently an ever-growing satirical companion (the *Noncord*).

Every year the *Concord* is revived in the new vision of the student body. Each year the *Concord* finds itself in new hands, waiting to be created in accord with those who are willing to write. In short, this publication is your publication.

What will you add to the family tree of Luther Seminary? What is your investment? Your thoughts, concerns, and opinions are part of creating the rich history of Luther Seminary. The ideal of the *Concord* is to serve as a reflection of you. Our question to you this year is not "What will you say?" but rather, "How will you say it?" Speak with and for your community because you are the most valuable asset to our continuing conversation.

# From the Mann Himself

**By John Martin Mann**

Seminary pastor



*Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6-7)*

As most of you know, I have been in mega-transition for the last few months: boxes, moving vans, changing houses, changing jobs. I have traveled hundreds of miles and begun to learn a whole new community. There have been moments when I was so lost (literally and figuratively) that I could barely keep my sense of self. I confess that to you by way of introduction to my natural reaction — anxiety! I have seen spots before my eyes, checked my pulse when my heart was racing, taken a baby aspirin to stave off stroke and done structured meditation in the middle of the night to lower my anxiety. (All that, and I like it here!)

I know that I am not alone. I have listened to new and returning students confess to real struggle with the pace of change. A returning senior confessed to me recently that, upon her return to Luther, everything had changed. I expected traumatic change for juniors and interns, but even seniors?!

Truth told, anxiety is disorienting and sometimes debilitating, and change is often at the root of it. We homo-sapiens have a brain structured at its base to prefer homeostasis: same heartbeat, same respirations,

same body temperature. And anxiety usually causes us to revert to this reptilian brain — change is threat.

Unfortunately, we live in a world where change seems to increase at an exponential level. Rabbi Edwin Friedman once said that he believed we have just become aware that the speed of change increases at an exponential, not arithmetic rate. The speed of change which has seemed to move from 2 to 4 now jumps not to 6 but to 8, and our anxiety over change continues to skyrocket.

Anxiety itself is more toxic than we have usually recognized. Glen Davidson, an M.Div., M.D., Ph.D. thanatologist writes that, in coping with the grief of change, many people after six months test like AIDS patients. Their immune system is largely destroyed. The adrenaline of stress destroys the immune system's T-1 helper cells.

So what of us and our new beginnings?

I think it is important to grieve our losses. We should try to celebrate our new circumstances and their possibilities. In the meantime, we should be sure to responsibly care for ourselves. We should eat, sleep, exercise, hydrate, stay socially involved and most of all lean into our devotions and prayers. Anxiety is often, after all, an admission of insufficient faith. We are tempted to trust ourselves instead of trusting God. As Philippians reminds us, as we trust God, we have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

*John Martin Mann*  
Seminary pastor  
October 2006

## CONCORD

concord@luthersem.edu • (651) 641-3260

*Natalie L. Gessert, managing editor*

*Andy Behrendt, production manager*

*Edward Glade, copy editor*

*Jeni Falkman, contributing editor*

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Readers are encouraged to interact with the *Concord* in a variety of ways. Articles and "Letters to the Editor" are welcomed, as are less formal responses offered through the online version. All submissions should include the author's name, telephone number and, if applicable, class standing. Submissions should be received in our mailbox in the Olson Campus Center (701); at our office, Gullixson 10; or by e-mail.

The managing editor reserves the right to publish, edit, or disregard all submissions.



# Women and HIV/AIDS: Confronting the Crisis

A caring church can help to turn around the tragedy in Africa

By Margaret Obaga

Second-year M.Th. student

One of the descriptions given to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa states, "It has the face of a woman." Such a description for the spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, which leaves the infected person exposed to an array of diseases known collectively as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), is not fair to equate with a woman! However, both in the literal and symbolic sense, this poignant statement carries with it the whole complexity and entirety of the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls. Writing contextually on a situation of such global magnitude points to the devastation it has caused upon the world, Africa in particular.

If figures are anything to go by, I am reminded that in sub-Saharan Africa today, more than 57 percent of adults with HIV are women. Furthermore, young women aged 15-24 are more likely to be infected than young men. Although the crisis extends to people of both genders, women have been most ravaged, and urgent attention must be paid to protect and save this corner of society from perishing. This is also to recognize that the situation in Africa has gone from emergency to tragedy. As tragedy, HIV/AIDS is endangering not just the lives of infected people but also the social, economic and political fabric of society.

The situation of women is worsened by the sad reality of their lack of knowledge regarding how HIV/AIDS is transmitted and how to prevent infection. However, the little they know is often rendered useless by the discrimination and violence they face.

The situation of women is a matter of deep concern. It is the women who have taken on the care of HIV/AIDS patients. They provide home-based assistance, care for orphans, cultivate crops and find employment to keep families going. They clean, cook and nurse, often without access to clean water and sanitary supplies. Because of the additional work involved for the caring for the sick, fields are lying fallow, children are taken out of school to help, and households are not being maintained. The rate of infection among these women is not only high, but when combined with the workload that they take on in addition to caring for HIV/AIDS patients and orphans, as well as their own families, the situation becomes untenable, as is already the case in the East and Southern parts of Africa.

However, women must not be regarded as victims. They are, in many places, leading the way forward. In Africa today, both men and women are taking action to increase knowledge about the disease, expand access to reproductive health and educational services, increase women's ability to negotiate safer sexual relations and combat gender discrimination and violence.

Stories from Africa show innovative practices and strategies

Although the crisis extends to people of both genders, women have been most ravaged, and urgent attention must be paid to protect and save this corner of society from perishing.

for survival are pioneered everyday by women living with HIV/AIDS. The limitations lie elsewhere: the painful shortage of resources, especially for women and women's issues and the lack of political will. For many years, the voices and demands of women, particularly women living with HIV/AIDS, have gone unheard. The world, let alone the church, can no longer afford to ignore them. Financial resources are needed to care for and treat them. I believe that to reduce, let alone stop HIV/AIDS (no cure to date), we must make efforts that focus simultaneously on individual behavioral change and on wider socio-cultural and economic change. Realistic strategies must be found that address the triple challenge of poverty, gender inequality and HIV/AIDS.

I believe that as a church, we are called to put an end to stigma and discrimination that limit women's access to treatment and leave them responsible for taking care of the ill and dying. As a church, we must make it possible to envision a future with hope. A prophetic call to the church is coming from those suffering from HIV/AIDS who by their very presence move the church to respond out of compassion. Every person infected by this disease is created in the image of God. They are Christ in our midst, deeply in need of unconditional love, acceptance and support by the church. Those not infected are also vulnerable, especially young people who need the strong support of our church to provide education and actively promote prevention.

These women share their stories, and as a church who dares to listen, the church can be moved to repent of how it has sinned against those who are infected with this disease by fear, lack of information, stigmatization, or failure to act.

The church can become a caring, accepting and prophetic community for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. With committed and outspoken leadership prepared to speak the truth about HIV/AIDS and its prevention, the church, with millions of willing hands and caring hearts, can help prevent the spread and care for all affected people.





# A Cooperative Challenge

African immigrant churches in the Twin Cities share their journey of faith

By the Rev. Faith K. Lugazia

Second-year Ph.D. student

Through confessing and practicing Christianity, African immigrants who are living in Minnesota share their journey of faith in the Immigrant Congregation series, a program launched by Luther Seminary. Dr. Frieder Ludwig initiated the program by doing research on African immigrant churches in the Twin Cities. The research reveals that, in the Twin Cities alone, there are more than 75 African churches. The research also revealed that, although immigrants come from different cultures, they face similar challenges and needs. His curiosity to know how these churches do their mission led him, with other members of those churches, to introduce the African Immigrant series at Luther Seminary.

The program was initiated to look at challenges facing immigrants, how evangelization is done by outsiders within the American context, how these churches can network and, above all, what churches in the United States can do to improve the situation of their brothers and sisters who are victims. Through the series, professors of Luther Seminary and natives of Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Egypt and Sudan have shared exciting experiences on their journey of faith.

Through sharing, the Luther Seminary community was challenged to open its eyes and be ready to learn what the

spirit of discernment has to do to the church and his people in the world. The Sudanese have experienced social and political conflicts, resulting in war. This war, which leaves the family scattered and makes citizens unable to attend schools, was among the hot issues discussed on the Sept. 22 series. It became hot because when the uneducated immigrant to the United States, they are required to have qualified education in order to participate in any work, including evangelization. The war and education issues left the participants with the question, "What can be done to help these people apart from formal education?"

Through the project, the Luther Seminary community is gaining a sense of ecumenism from the fact that denominational backgrounds find little space when people from the same country come to worship in a foreign land.

**Series will continue as follows:**

➤ **Oct. 20, 2006** – The Church in Sierra Leone and Nigeria/Sierra Leonean and Nigerian Christians in Minnesota

➤ **Nov. 3, 2006** – Gender Differentiation & The New Role of Women

➤ **Nov. 17, 2006** – The Church in Liberia/Liberian Christians in Minnesota

➤ **Dec. 8, 2006** – The Church in Kenya/Kenyan Christians in Minnesota

Remember, the process of learning and conversation leads all people to be transformed.

## A request for hymnals

When I was in South Africa in summer 2004, a pastor from one of the Indian Lutheran congregations in the Durban area asked me if I could get 500 Lutheran Books of Worship (LBWs) sent to them. I preached at his congregation that Sunday and was amazed to see that they are still using the red hymnal used prior to the LBW. The Indian congregations in South Africa are English-speaking, and he would see that these hymnals get distributed among them.

Many of us know of congregations that will close or have closed their doors, will be changing to use the Renewing Worship resources or may just have more LBWs than they know what to do with. One church — one that has now closed its doors — sent 67 hymnals to Pastor Naicker in Durban, South Africa.

I have to admit that I, personally, cannot afford to send all these books to South Africa. But, if you know of a congregation that would be willing to donate and send LBWs to South Africa, please contact me (lwebster@luthersem.edu) and I will give you the address and specific mailing instructions for how to send the books. Thank you.

*Linda Webster*

Senior M.Div. and M.A., cross-cultural ministry

## International students by the numbers

By Marie Y. Hayes

Coordinator,  
International Student Services

As the academic year 2005-06 was coming to a close, the Office of International Student Services was already making arrangements for new international students that would enroll during fall 2006, ensuring that each student had the necessary documents to begin the student visa process.

While 18 new international students were expected to start during fall 2006, we enrolled 10 new international students, making the total international student body 49. This reduced number is a result of visa complications or lack of adequate financial resources.

The total number of international students is limited

to those international students in a particular visa category, such as a student visa or religious visa. There are even those completing requirements while not physically present at Luther and those who have completed graduation requirements, but are presently engaged in optional practical training. These students come from 20 different countries; 14 are female and 35 are male.

There are other students that may fall within the international student category, for example, persons born outside of the United States who are now permanent residents or "green card" holders or citizens of the United States. We usually seek to include those students in programs and other activities intended for international students.



# Public Speech or Public Silence

Luther Seminary explores the role of the church in the world

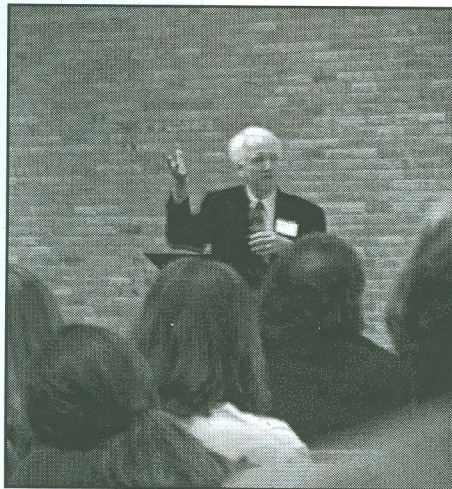
By Marc Ostlie-Olson

M.Div. senior

It takes some energy to raise a question at Luther Seminary, perhaps especially if the asker hopes for a thoughtful response from those queried. This place has a certain urgent inertia about it — the force of what seems to be too much information pressed into not enough time. We fidget if chapel edges past 23 minutes in length. Lectures move like houses on fire. Assignments are often typed at the expense of sleep. Even meals are hurried. It's no wonder that questions not appearing on the syllabus are often ducked, or deflected with a wave and a smile as we pass.

Last Wednesday, about 150 Luther community members and guests applied the brakes for a few hours to consider the extra-curricular question of leadership in public life. We were joined by the Rev. Craig Johnson and the Rev. Peter Rogness, the two local ELCA bishops, as well as area clergy and representatives from some of the faith-based advocacy and service organizations in our network. The gathering was planned, organized and hosted by a committee of students, staff and faculty who believe that the way the church thinks about and engages its public ministry is worth exploring in this place as we seek to prepare our graduates for the various ministries to which they are called.

Remarks during the post-chapel panel presentation came at the question from a wide range of examples and contexts, from the Hebrew midwives' civil disobedience in the Exodus narrative to the Evangelical Great Awakenings of the 18th and 19th centuries, and from the height of the farm crisis in the 1980s to contemporary life on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation. Articulating a vision of the whole church's call to advocacy and action, Johnson reflected on the commitments affirmed by ELCA confirmands, "to strive for justice and peace in all the earth." Rogness offered an expanded notion of faith that goes beyond "a series of doctrinal agreements" to radical trust in God that leads to "loving what God loves."



St. Paul Area Synod Bishop Peter Rogness

Informal lunchtime conversations gave participants opportunity to pursue themes raised in the panel presentation. Afternoon workshops attempted to transition from the "why" questions

to matters of how local organizations, congregations and synods are choosing to shape their public ministries of service and advocacy. The tabletop displays came down by 3 p.m., and the workshops wrapped up by 4:30. By 5 p.m., the OCC was back to its normal rhythm.

Hoping to weave this conversation more deeply into Luther Seminary's consciousness, organizers plan to establish this as an annual event. Future conversations will benefit from the insight of our Bible faculty and the experience of our preaching teachers. It will be interesting to explore the questions through the lenses of our missional and confessional categories. It will be illuminating to include voices and perspectives from outside the ELCA — even when the issues they champion make some of us uncomfortable. And, as always, it will be important to listen as carefully as possible to those with the most at stake in the church's public speech or public silence.

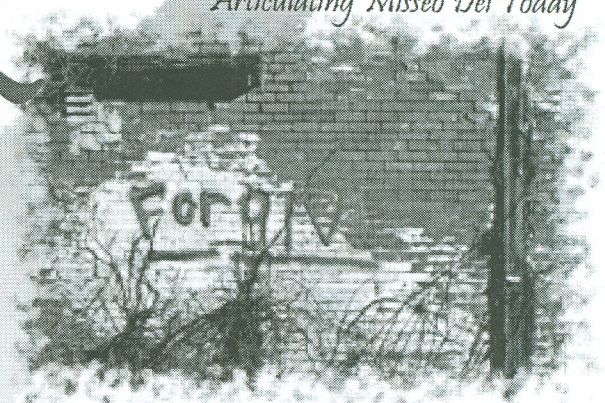
## The Andrew S. Burgess Lecture in Global Mission

# Healing & Reconciliation

*Articulating Missio Dei Today*

Monday,  
Oct. 9, 2006  
10 am

Chapel of the  
Incarnation  
Luther Seminary



Guest Speaker:  
**Rev. Rafael Malpica Padilla**



Ecumenical Spotlight

Coming Full Circle

Once an ecumenical student, Wells is Luther’s first full-time ecumenical coordinator

By Andy Behrendt  
M.Div. junior

A little known fact: Debra Wells sewed her own chasuble. Remember that vestment she wore at chapel on Sept. 20? She made it. Wells enjoys sewing vestments — stoles, chasubles and scapulars, but not albs — for special people in her life, like students.

And for non-ELCA students at Luther Seminary, Wells provides a common thread in her role as the seminary’s first full-time ecumenical coordinator.

“Having been an ecumenical student here in the early ‘90s, it just seems so like a full circle that I’m back, working with the students that I was at one time,” said Wells, 52, an ordained United Methodist elder. “And I had such a rich experience here. I hope to be able to help nurture that experience for students — for both the ELCA and the non-ELCA students.”

Back in the day, Wells was one in a handful of non-ELCA students in the Master of Divinity program at what was then Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary. Today, ecumenical students make up 18 percent of Luther Seminary’s student body. They choose Luther for a variety of reasons, Wells said, including the seminary’s location and reputation.

Originally from Iowa, Wells has lived in Minnesota since 1974. She had been a nutrition and sports-fitness instructor at the YMCA and, she said, an overcommitted church volunteer before coming to Luther as something of a last resort. Other seminaries wouldn’t work out, she said, because of policies she considered legalistic.

Ordained as a Methodist elder after graduating in 1993, she served at Riverview United Methodist Church in Brooklyn Park for 10 years. She meanwhile served as a police chaplain and oversaw a half-million dollars in literacy grant funding. And she directed a support group for women and children experiencing domestic violence, which she still continues.

Her return to Luther Seminary came in November 2004, she said, after a highway project cut off access to her Brooklyn Park church and called for a minister who could perform more traditional evangelism. Wells’ passions as a minister have been peace and justice — as reflected, she said, in the special liturgy that she used at chapel on Sept. 20.

Despite impressions when she took the job that some people considered ecumenism a dirty word, she believes resistance to things non-Lutheran comes from a small sector on campus.

“With our mainline churches going into decline, as people say, we can tend to become very parochial,” she said. “I’m hoping that my presence and the presence of others who have this kind of passion can help us remember that we are really part of a body of Christ. And even if we can’t become unified denominationally, maybe we can at least act like a body of Christ.”

Along with her day-to-day work with students, Wells also works with the Jay Phillips Center for Jewish-Christian Learning and will be leading the cross-cultural trip to El Salvador.

“We’ll be using work from Lutheran World Relief as part of our reflection for that trip,” Wells said. “So I do use Lutheran stuff.”



**Debra Wells**  
Ecumenical coordinator  
**Age:** 52  
**Family:** two adult children  
**Hobbies:** gardening, sewing vestments

This semester, 148 ecumenical students make up 18 percent of Luther Seminary’s student body.

A breakdown of non-ELCA students by denomination:

Baptist	24	Presbyterian (International)	10
Christian Missionary Alliance	5	Roman Catholic	4
Conference of Congregational Christian Churches	2	United Methodist	16
United Church of Christ	3	The Salvation Army	1
Episcopal	5	Assembly of God	3
Evangelical Covenant	6	African Methodist Episcopal Church	2
Islam	2	No Designation	23
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod	13	Evangelical Free Church	1
Mennonite	1	Latter-day Saints	1
Non-denominational	8	Eastern Orthodox	1
Presbyterian (PCUSA)	15	Seventh Day Adventist	1
		Religious Society of Friends	1



## Slow Down with Contemplative Prayer

By Travis Gerjets

M.Div. intern

Life moves too fast. It would be nice to think that here on our seminary campus this wouldn't be the case, but at Luther almost the opposite is true. Between the lectures, the library and the long drives between home and/or church responsibilities, it seems that there is no longer any time to just breathe. If we don't check in once in awhile, if we don't intentionally slow our life down, we occasionally find ourselves drifting through days, weeks, months – or even our entire careers on campus or at church offices – robotically performing tasks at the speed of light. Well, friends, I would like to remind you that you are not a machine.

St. Benedict, the founder of western monasticism, recognized this during his life and came up with a simple but revolutionary answer to busyness: prayer. For Benedict, prayer, and lots of it, was a way to continually re-ground oneself in Christ. These retreats of prayer attempt to bring the depth, beauty and soulfulness back into both our lives and our work. Benedict developed his own schedule of “praying the hours,” that is, turning prayerfully to the psalms as a community at ritual times during the day. Sounds amazing, right? Well, many might be surprised to discover this, but Luther Seminary does offer a Benedictine Prayer Service modeled after St. Benedict's noon office!

For those who love contemplative prayer (for example Taize and Holden prayer) or need some time for a deep breath and re-grounding in Christ, a **Benedictine Prayer Service is held every Friday at 12:05 p.m. in Room 30 of Bockman Hall (in the basement).** The prayer services are short, lasting 15-20 minutes, and are a wonderful way to end the work week and start the weekend. All are welcome. Stop by this Friday to check it out, take a deep breath and slow down.

## Chapel: An Opportunity

It's a delight of normal, healthy Gospel living

By Mark Nygard

Ph.D. student

“We were kind of a 45-Sunday-a-year family when I was growing up,” I used to tell my parishioners. “Going to church on a Sunday was the norm, but if we missed on occasion, when someone was sick, or when we were traveling, we didn't lie awake worrying about it.” I suppose I talked like this to encourage my parishioners to view worship not as a burden of the Law, but as a delight of normal healthy Gospel living.

It's the beginning of another seminary year. One of the special opportunities of our brief time here at Luther is seminary chapel. We have here daily contact with some of the finest preachers, some of the greatest music, some of the most talented colleagues, some of the most unique life stories to be found anywhere in the Christian church on earth. Our choir has brought me to tears in rehearsal, for pity sakes. When you think of the potential benefits of chapel time, it staggers the imagination: Word from the Almighty, Jesus walking in our midst, Bread of Life served from heaven, God's own Family there before our eyes. No wonder you never know what's going to happen in chapel. Every day is a surprise.

It won't be there forever for most of us, at least not in this form. In a year or two or three most of us will be back in parish life somewhere, probably listening to our own

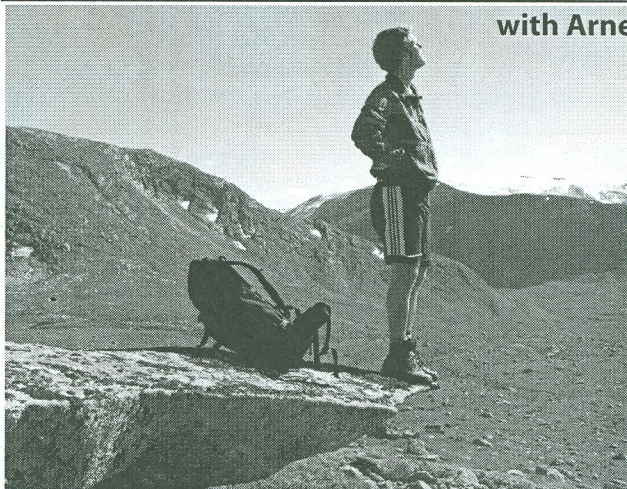
sermons more often than not, probably fretting about our congregation's response to our impeccable choice of hymns. Many of us will look back on these incredible years at seminary and wish we could slip back for a week or a term or a year. Our media people are great, and you can see these things on the web these days, but it's not the same as being here. Now is when we get to be here.

I don't want to lay a guilt trip on you and make these remarkable 20 minutes each day into Law that beats us up when you miss. As a pastor who has taken calls far, far from the seminary, I'd like to say that seminary chapel is one of the really precious treasures of this place. This year we get yet another set of chances to drink it up. Is it too low-key to invite you to be “a kind of 45-Sunday-a-year student” with regard to chapel? That acknowledges that there will be the occasional miss — a late paper under the gun, an unavoidable conference with a colleague, a balky car that wouldn't start, and nuisance hours on the job that holds your body and soul together. No need to beat ourselves up.

But it also acknowledges the treasure in our midst. It's there. He's there. And celebrating His Presence is one of the delights of normal healthy Gospel living. And in chapel we get to do that as a seminary community every single, blessed weekday of the school year. This year, why not live it up, and make it your norm.

## Speak like a Scandinavian

with Arne Braut Non-degree student



Arne's Norwegian phrase is:

**Høstens Mål:  
Slankekur &  
Sunn Livsstil**

*“The goal for the fall: a  
strict diet and a healthy  
lifestyle”*



# Healthy Living in the ELCA

Begin exercising now to thwart problems later

By Jesse Christopherson  
M.Div. middler

So, you want to be a pastor. Well, I think it's only fair that I should inform you that there are some risks that go along with the job. Aside from the normal hazards such as overzealous organists, shaky-handed crucifers and death via incorrect usage of the law, you should know that pastors in the ELCA are at a higher risk for heart disease than your normal American, or even pastors of other denominations.

How can this be, you ask? After all, we as scholars of the Bible should know that God calls us to be stewards of God's creation, which most certainly includes our own bodies. Even so, 68 percent of ELCA clergy are considered to be overweight or obese, as compared to the national average of 61 percent. 28 percent of ELCA clergy and rostered lay leaders report elevated cholesterol. One out of four rostered leaders reports no exercise at all. In fact, a recent study shows that clergy are in the top 10 occupations dying from heart disease, and Lutheran clergy have a higher rate of heart disease than clergy of other denominations.

Our health problems are not merely confined to matters of the body, either. The ELCA Board of Pensions pays out \$2.8 million dollars per year for anti-

*A recent study shows that clergy are in the top 10 occupations dying from heart disease, and Lutheran clergy have a higher rate of heart disease than clergy of other denominations.*

depression medication. Also, about 20 percent of the rostered leaders report dissatisfaction with their devotional lives, 11 percent of clergy and 10 percent of rostered lay leaders report being neutral or disagreeing that their sense of commitment to their present calling is strong, and about 7 percent report that they don't plan to remain in their current vocation until retirement. Sounds a little scary, doesn't it?

Luckily, you can do something about it. You don't have to wait until you are working full-time in a church to start. You can begin focusing on your health right now. The Healthy Leaders Initiative (HLI) here at Luther Seminary has made it a priority to ensure the next generation of ELCA pastors is healthier than the previous generations. Parish nurse Karen Treat is in charge of HLI and organizing events and programs such as the "Here I Step" walking group, a "Stretch and Pray" morning group and diet counseling. The Healthy Leaders

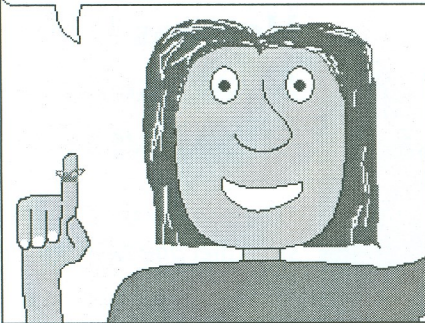
Initiative hopes to get Luther students more involved in improving and maintaining their own level of health.

In addition to these programs and events this year, the HLI has connected itself with various intramural sports that occur during the year. Starting this fall, students can participate in Luther Heretics intramural soccer, ultimate Frisbee down at the Sandgren fields, and basketball over at Murray Junior High. The HLI hopes to offer more activities for all seasons of the year.

So, this fall in the midst of reading texts, writing papers and translating obscure languages, the Healthy Leaders Initiative would ask that you consider your own health as being as important as your studies. Drink lots of water, exercise a few times a week, and maybe cut down on those blueberry-cream cheese croissants for breakfast. And remember, only Jesus can preach from the grave.

## FIRST TIME AT SEMINARY

Attention first year students;  
remember to write to your professors  
and ask them if they are Christian  
before you register for classes.



<input type="radio"/>	Dear Professor,
<input type="radio"/>	I am thinking
<input type="radio"/>	about taking your
<input type="radio"/>	class. Do you
<input type="radio"/>	love Jesus?

A friendly reminder from your senior class...

by matt knopf © 2006

## In the next CONCORD

### What's New in This Old World?

We'll take a look at reformation trends retro and intro.  
What has changed at Luther Seminary?  
What stays the same?  
Our view extends to the greater church and community and how it affects life here at seminary.

Please submit articles by **Tuesday, Oct. 24.**

If interested in being solicited for articles in the future, please send an e-mail to [concord@luthersem.edu](mailto:concord@luthersem.edu). Pay rate is \$15 per article with up to 250 words and \$25 per article with more than 250 words.



## Eat Your Way Through the Twin Cities

**By Natalie Gessert**

*Concord* managing editor

As our church and community are swept away in constant demands for unity, a recent discovery has been made. There is indeed one banner under which all can unite: food. Until the Parousia, Jesus Christ continues to round us up for the Supper of the Lamb; but in the meanwhile, we can make it our task to wrangle over the mint jelly.

In most cultures, the kitchen is the central meeting place. While growing up, I moved every three to four years, and the one constant our family relied on was nightly supper together. Sometimes the food was different, often the table was not our own, but my parents, brothers and I truly know each other because of our evening roundtable. I find roughly the same experience at Luther. Food helps us gather for discussion and creates a natural meeting place to sustain our needs and bring voice to our desires.

In light of this, the *Concord* would like to encourage more meeting, more discussing and more eating! Please join the *Concord* for "Eat Your Way Through the Twin Cities," a program to bring students, faculty and staff to the table. We invite you to enjoy one another as we experience the wonderful variety of cuisine here, whether exotic food or just the best darn hotdish you ever ate. Write us at [concord@luthersem.edu](mailto:concord@luthersem.edu) with venue suggestions, and watch for our next event on LutherNet. And to entice your presence, the *Concord* will pay for your supper if you'll write the review!

### Blue Nile Restaurant

2027 E. Franklin Ave., St. Paul  
[www.bluenilempls.com/homepage.html](http://www.bluenilempls.com/homepage.html)

Offering a full-service Ethiopian menu, Blue Nile promises a unique communal eating experience including textures, scents and spices. The Gosa Gosa Platters are diverse and filling — and easily pronounceable for the patron lost in a sea of multi-syllabic foreign menu items. Your meal is accompanied by soft, spongy flatbread; use it to pick up your entrée instead of a fork. A delight for the health-conscious, the lumps of stew and curries are made mostly from lentils and lean meats and flavored with a host of colorful spices; Blue Nile is vegetarian and heart friendly!

Despite authentic Ethiopian atmosphere including rich artwork, large wooden furniture, and brightly designed carpets, much of the service is catered by Minnesota college students (who are happy to explain any menu item). Blue Nile has bar-time Happy Hour every day from 4 to 7 p.m. On most nights, Blue Nile hosts live music and dancing on the lower level of the restaurant. Enjoy diverse and traditional African music event.

## Grieving Internship

Now, that's Efficiency with a capital E

**By Kevin Bergeson**

M.Div. senior

Brow dripping sweat, panting heavily, hamstrings on fire, I threw down the allen wrench. These are the joys of assembling a futon for your new living space. My day had consisted of spending time in willing wanderlust in the newly completed Super Target in Roseville for a few essentials for my efficiency apartment in LDR. I spent the day playing Good Mr. Consumer, and topped the day off by returning to Target to get the futon. If loving Target is wrong, I don't wanna be right. Of course, the futon has a million pieces, and little wrenches, and funny directions including an 800 number to call with problems.

I just felt so gross. I had spent a year learning about ministry in a large congregation in Las Vegas and working on building relationships with many people: congregants, staff, my supervisor, my valet (kidding). Now, I am back and living on Fulham and admiring how quiet it is. No booty-shakin' beats below me, no high-pitched motorcycles screeching outside my window. I am also admiring how I can make French toast in my kitchen from the comfort of my bed. E is for efficient!

Aside from my adventures in capitalism, I went to the State Fair with friends and mingled in that giant mass of humanity. I really missed my community here when I was in Vegas and just when I made a new one there that took my quirks in stride, I was uprooted again. Now that I am back, I am grasping at everything I can to fill the void that has been emptied by leaving. I read all the CLI stuff on saying goodbye and even revamped my entire sermon at the last minute my last Sunday. It does not help. I am here now dealing with losing this community through, as my wise friend Rebecca calls it, "retail therapy" (except mine is with iTunes and Guitar Center) and making plans with as many people as possible. God, how can being in the midst of community be so lonely?

My big question now is, after a year of the Holy Spirit taking sandpaper (sometimes a cudgel) to my theology, life and relationships, I know I am a very different person than when I left year a year ago. How can I live out who I am now after what has happened to me? I am not, nor would I want to slip back into who I was. How can I honor my experience and recognize the changes I see reflected in this community? I will wrestle with this all fall. Yes, many of my classmates are gone, I will know few people, so maybe I sulk in the back of chapel and tear my robe and wear ashes. This cannot happen!

M.Div. Seniors are coming back from varied experiences to a challenging fall of discernment. Seminary community, welcome them back with encouraging words and realize many will be going through grief in their own way. Seniors, name and own it, and move forward. New students will have just said goodbye to their communities too, perhaps for the first time! "Have I not commanded you, be strong and courageous ... I will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). Seniors, share your stories of your adventures with the community. Don't just pull away; we need to hear the story of how God is at work in the world. Your story is now woven into the fabric of that internship community and the story of God. We all have new sets of questions about being church today as we approach this new year. Honor the questions. The Body of Christ is being built up through reciprocal story telling.

The world needs what we have: a relationship with Jesus Christ, living and reigning. We have the promise of God's relentless solidarity with ourselves and our world. God is present walking with us through the valley of the shadow of death. God walks with us through the grief of leaving internships and other communities. God is on a mission that will change the world in Jesus' name and invites us to join it. God will give us peace while putting together those damn futons, too. It's go time.



# The Sweet Sound of Speculation

‘Love, Love, Love’

Discussing: King Saul, Sonny Liston, Joseph, Raskolnikov, pious prostitutes, phantom punches, prolepsis, 1 Corinthians 13:12, tiger balm, faith, hope and love, love, love.

By **Jeni Falkman**  
M.Div. Middler

What is it about a song that carries us through a moment, through a movie, through a life? Why do couples have “their song,” one that conveys a memory, a meaning and a promise? And why does the rain in Spain stay mainly in the plains? I don’t know; I just know that I love music. I wake up in the morning with a song on my mind and it carries me through the day. Between classes and a busy work schedule music is a three-and-a-half minute repose that allows me to breathe, focus and abstract myself for just a moment before jumping back into the chaos. Music helps me to create order.

I find in music what I find difficult in class: the articulation of a thing. One can find sermons in songs, and not even Christian songs. One can find brief summaries on human sin and despair in songs, even in Christian songs. Songs, music and melody can help to convey our collective and individual experiences, theologies and heresies.

As a brief introduction to this feature, I’d like to note that knowledge of the songs here discussed is not necessary. I believe that the theological outsgights (not so much insight) can be understood without hearing the song. However, let this also be an introduction to some music you might just enjoy. I know I sure do.

The song I have selected for this issue is “Love, Love, Love” by The Mountain Goats. It is found on the 2005 release *The Sunset Tree*. The song examines the motivation of love, the work of love, and the promise of love:

*King Saul fell on his sword when it all went wrong  
Joseph’s brothers sold him down the river for a song  
And Sonny Liston rubbed some tiger balm onto his glove  
Some things you do for money,  
and some you do for love, love, love*

We first see the outcome of actions that are not motivated by love. King Saul, fleeing from the wrath of God and afraid of David’s ascension to power, falls on his sword in a cave, eventually killing himself (1 Samuel 31:4). Joseph’s brothers hated him for the dreams they feared to be true, first conspiring to kill him, but later deciding to sell him to a passing cohort of Ishmaelites (Gen 37:5, 27) only later to fulfill Joseph’s dreams. Charles “Sonny” Liston cheated in both of his fights against Cassius Clay/Muhammad Ali. In their first fight in 1964 Liston rubbed tiger balm onto his glove blinding Clay; Liston would eventually pull up lame and end the fight. Second, in 1965, Liston feigned a knock out in the opening minutes of the match while Ali threw the infamous phantom punch, which may or may not have landed across Liston’s jaw.

*Raskolnikov felt sick, but he couldn’t say why  
When he saw his face reflected in his victims twinkling eye  
Some things you do for money, and some you do for fun  
But the things you do for love  
are gonna come back to you one by one.*

Next we see the trump of the power of love on those who would hope to transcend it. Robbing and murdering two women in Dostoevsky’s Crime and Punishment, Raskolnikov hoped to escape any sort of judgment, as if he were above the law. Despite Raskolnikov’s attempt to ignore his sin, thus making it inapplicable, his guilt would not let him. Raskolnikov’s guilt drove him mad. It was the love of the pious prostitute Sofya whose love not only forced his confession, but also rehabilitated his life. He loses everything, but love does not lose him.

*Love, love is gonna lead us by the hand  
Into the white and soundless place  
Now we see things as in a mirror dimly  
Then we shall see each other face to face*

Is love then what we search for; is our love redemptive? Indeed, love is what we are called to do, but love is also what we are looking forward to; love is what we are hoping for; but, “Now we see things as in a mirror dimly,” now we have love only in faith, only in hope, we do not yet see love face to face. Even so, “We shall see face to face.” This does not mean that we hold off on love, by no means! It means that what we see now, our generation’s malevolence, like those before, is not the ultimate epitome of love and it is not all that we get in Christ: “Faith, hope and love abide and the greatest of these is love.” This is not the trite stuff that weddings are made of, but rather a confession that when we see God face to face we will no longer hold God in faith and hope but will see God, we will see love, the greatest of all things as reality. But I proleptically digress.

*Way out in Seattle, young Kurt Cobain  
Snuck out to the greenhouse, put a bullet in his brain  
Snakes in the grass beneath our feet, rain in the clouds above,  
Some moments last forever,  
and some flare out with love, love, love*

I find the order of the song, that this verse immediately follows the Pauline reference, crucial. We, as Lutherans, as Christians, as people, are never above what we see currently. We do have the peace that passes all understanding, but this peace does not mean that we are sheltered from strife. Nor are we to shy away from it. The song ends in reference to Kurt Cobain, the lead singer of the ground-breaking grunge band Nirvana, who killed himself with a sawed-off shotgun at the age of 27. He was young; he was talented; he was a lot like a lot of people we will encounter in our congregations. We are called to preach, teach, care for and minister to these very people because of and out of love, love, love.



# Concord Events Calendar

By Anna Marsh  
M.A. senior

Don't be fooled: Living in the Midwest is not banishment to a cultural wasteland! Here are hints for moderately priced, culturally enlightening evenings out:

Movies:

Who doesn't love fall? Apple cider, pumpkin pie, turning leaves ... and a blessed end to the season of blockbusters! (Hint: The number of layers you are wearing is inversely proportionate to the number of explosions you will sit through at the multiplex.) And while *Jackass: Number Two* might appeal to your escapist tendencies, theaters near you are also showing thought-provoking and artistic movies. Consider *Little Miss Sunshine*, *The Black Dahlia*, *The Illusionist*, *All the King's Men* and *Half Nelson*. Also, *Jesus Camp* will open here soon, promising provocative conversation.

Books/Lectures:

- **Oct. 9:** Minnesota's favorite son, **Garrison Keillor**, discusses *Homegrown Democrat*; U of M Bookstore (Washington Avenue SE), 7 p.m.
- **Oct. 14:** **Phillip Yancey** talks about God for a change. *Prayer: Does It Really Make Any Difference?* Hopkins High School auditorium. 7 p.m.
- **Oct. 20:** Minnesota's redheaded stepchild, **Al Franken**, discusses *The Truth (with Jokes)*. Har-Mar Barnes & Noble. 7 p.m.

Theater:

- **Oct. 6-14:** Macalester College presents *Proof*. Legacy, love, trust ... math? For tickets, call (651) 696-6359.
- **Through Nov. 2:** Brave New Workshop presents *The Left, The Right and The Ugly — or — Blue State Blues*. Improv

feel — always funny, always sharp. Tickets \$15-24.

- **Through Dec. 1:** *Church Basement Ladies* at the Plymouth Playhouse. It's funny because it's true. Tickets \$22-34.
- **Oct. 21:** Stand-up comic **Brian Regan** is not surly or uncaring; he is funny. Very funny. And clean! State Theatre, 8 p.m., \$35.

Festivals/Outdoor Events:

- **Oct. 13-15:** **Saint Paul Art Crawl**, downtown Saint Paul. It's big. See [www.artcrawl.org](http://www.artcrawl.org) for more information.
- **Oct. 14:** **Twin Cities Book Festival:** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free ... except for books you can't resist. See [www.raintaxi.com](http://www.raintaxi.com) for details.

Family-friendly events:

- **Oct. 7:** **Whiz Kids Family Day**, Walker Art Center. Explores how we use science and math to appreciate art. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free admission.
- **Oct. 13:** **Lemony Snicket's The End: Book the Thirteenth** Launch Party; Magers & Quinn Booksellers in Uptown, 7 p.m.
- **Through Oct. 29:** Minnesota Children's Theatre Company presents *The BFG* by Roald Dahl through Oct. 29. Tickets \$21-28.
- **Oct. 13-29:** The Youth Performance Company presents *The Boxcar Children* by Gertrude Chandler Warner. Ritz Theatre, tickets \$10-12.
- **Through Oct. 31:** **Minnesota Landscape Arboretum** features exhibits on apples (taste them—turn them into fritters) and scarecrows.

Halloween Activities:

- **Oct. 21-29:** **ZooBoo** at Como Park Zoo; 5-7:30 p.m. Admission \$5.
- **Oct. 28:** **Boo-ology** at the Science Museum. 1-4 p.m., free with admission to museum.
- **Oct. 29:** **Great Pumpkin Festival**, Landmark Center; 1 p.m. \$2 admission.

**SPOTLIGHT “Equipping for Peacemaking: A Workshop for Immersion in the Power and Creativity of Jesus’ Way of Shalom”** will train people in peacemaking and conflict-resolution skills that can then be shared in their faith communities.

Facilitated by Glen Gersmehl, director of Lutheran Peace Fellowship, the workshop will be 5-9 p.m. Oct. 13 and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Oct. 14 at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, 1660 County Road B West in Roseville. Gersmehl's credentials include serving as a United Nations delegate and helping pass a major arms-control treaty. Lay leaders and clergy of all denominations are invited to attend, but space is limited.

The \$40 registration fee includes Friday dinner and Saturday lunch. Scholarship aid is available. Call Donna Neste at (612) 827-5919 to register or for information. The public is also invited to hear Gersmehl speak on “Peacemaking in the Congregation” at another event, the Peace Forum, at 12:45 p.m. Oct. 15 at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

— Allison Schmitt, M.A. senior

# Welcome, families

By Jennie Thul  
M.Div. junior plus

Moving is a hateful task. You rip out the roots you've grown in your community, say goodbye to your friends and head off to a new world at seminary. Of course, when God called, you stood up and said “Here I am!” – but that voice can get drowned out as you live day to day, especially as you attempt to assimilate into new life.

Packing and unpacking boxes can be tough, but it generally has an end date—unless you look in many of the storage units in Burnvedt and Sandgren. Some belongings are simply in limbo as you stuff your spouse, children, pets, pots and pans and furniture in spaces perhaps a little smaller than what you once had.

A couple years ago when Jesse Ventura was the governor of this great state, he told David Letterman on national television that he thought the streets of St. Paul might have been designed by drunken Irishmen. His politically incorrect statement got a laugh and some ridicule from sober Irishmen today, but the message was unmistakable: The capital city is not car friendly. It took me a while, but I finally figured out that Luther Seminary sits pretty much at the heart of the Twin Cities. West is Minneapolis; east is St. Paul; south are Apple Valley, Mall of America and Mexico; and north is Duluth, a great Godfather's Pizza in New Brighton and most of the state's 10,000 Lakes. It took me quite a few trips and wrong turns. I told the kids to think of them as adventures. They did not think of them as adventures. They thought of them as painful experiences. I said good. Suffering develops character and character builds hope. It works. They now hope I used Mapquest before heading out to find a new destination.

I've spent most of this article playing around with what we've experienced, but the bottom line is that I am the Seminary Families Coordinator for the Sandgren and Burntvedt Apartments. My family has been here a little over a year and I wanted to take this position to mix it up, see if we can build on Anne Manz' great year and build community. I was lost when I first got here and felt a little lost in the flood. I will work hard to help people with their transition here – including driving tips! I made sure to put maps and guides of the area in the “Welcome Packet.”

We have a community potluck every month. Date Night is always the second Friday. People wanted a Bible study, so now there is a Women's Bible study that meets twice a month. Check your floor or stairwell for the monthly calendar, and if you've got things that might benefit the community, please feel free to contact me!



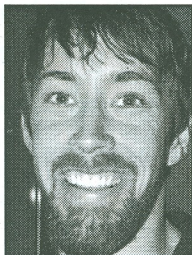
## Table Talk

The Concord asks ...

### What are you doing to stay healthy this semester?

"I ride my bike every day to school."

- **Phil Misner**  
M.Div. middler



(Proudly displaying the pedometer on his belt)

"I keep track of how many paces each day. On Monday, I had 8,500 paces and right now, I have 2,600."

- **Mark Nygard**  
Ph.D., second year

"I am taking more time to pray."

- **Karen Treat**  
Parish nurse



"I run about 20 miles a week. I set goals and try to be healthy."

- **Tauna Brown**  
M.A. junior

"I walk every day — one mile, sometimes three. I get a good night's sleep, and I try to eat well. Lots of fruits and veggies."

- **Dan Simundson**  
Professor emeritus of Old Testament



"Well, the other day, I decided to walk three miles to Bakers Square, buy an apple pie; met Cliff and Matt and downed the whole thing."

- **Stew Carlson**  
M.Div. senior

## Down the Hill

Luther Seminary through younger eyes

### Life at the seminary: It's good for me

By **Oliver Thul**

Son of students Daryl and Jennie Thul



Life at Luther Seminary is good for me because I have a lot of friends. There are a lot of nice people and I know more people than my mom.

For example, Signey and Simon are some of my friends here (at Burntvedt). Signey and I go to Brimhall Elementary School. Simon, her little brother, doesn't go to school yet. I think he goes to preschool. They're my friends because they are somewhat my age. Kate and Nick are also some of my friends. I like both families because they live in Burntvedt and it's closer to get to them. I don't have to go through a locked door. Janco and Sune moved from South Africa this summer. We like playing baseball.

My mom studies for a lot of stuff. My dad is in the National Guard, and he goes to seminary. The seminary students are trying to become pastors, or at least that's what I think. I think they have to go through Greek or Hebrew. My mom took Hebrew and Greek. I learned a couple of words in Hebrew. Shalom!

The students also have to write a lot of things. They are very busy. They have meetings in the morning and classes in the afternoon. Then they study in the evening. This affects me because when my mom is studying, I don't really get to talk to her.

If I could change something about the seminary, I would. First, I would make it so people didn't have to walk so far. I would put Burntvedt where the forest is so it's closer to the other buildings. Second, I would give students time to study in class so that they didn't have to study at home.

### Ask the Magic 8-Ball!

Real theological answers from  
the ball that knows all

Is there a  
balm in Gilead?

"It is decidedly so"

